



Emancipation through poverty reduction

By Phumela Msolo

The Deputy Minister of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR), Ms Candith Mashego-Dlamini, visited the Eastern Cape to hand over ploughing equipment to cooperatives in the province on 9 April 2019.

More than 20 cooperatives across the province each received a tractor and its ploughing equipment. The cooperatives were chosen with emphasis on those who are already farming as the department wanted to assist small and emerging farmers in the province.

The Buffalo City Metro's Member of Mayoral Committee (MMC) for Economic Development and Agencies, Mr Mzwandile Vaaiboom, told farmers that they are land owners and that is their responsibility to provide food security for the country through farming and job creation.

Ms Fezeka Mkile, who is one of the beneficiaries, said as farmers they must remember that farming is not only for farmers but it feeds the nation and creates employment. She also added that she hasn't been farming for three seasons because she has been using her neighbour's equipment which broke down and lead to them not ploughing.

One of the farmers, Ms Nozuko Cezula, encouraged farmers not to give up on their dreams to become farmers. She also shared that she had been waiting for assistance from the department and the farming equipment came at the right time as they are approaching their farming season in her district.

King Zwelonke Sigcau of Nqadu Great Place said "I am happy about the impact that these ploughing equipment will have on the people and asked cooperatives to take responsibility and maintain what they receive so that other communities can also benefit from government programmes".

The deputy minister also added that the department has started a programme where a Diploma in Cooperative Management is being introduced and currently has 58 learners who will be graduating soon.

The aim of this programme is to have trained graduates who will be able to assist cooperatives with finance management skills to reduce infighting within them, management of a cooperative and interpretation of constitutions and policies.

Farmers are also being equipped as business owners for them to manage their crop as well as to know how the market operates thus to store their seasonal produce for off-peak seasons so they can sell their produce at a higher price than they would during peak seasons.